

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of comments made in the Advisory Action dated September 26, 2007. In view of these comments, a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) is being filed concurrently herewith, so as to re-open prosecution on the merits and to afford additional opportunity to explain patentability of the present invention.

As part of the Request for Continued Examination, a Preliminary Amendment is being made to the independent claims herein, so as to emphasize that the maximum number of supported printing devices is designated by a system administrator, and that in this designation, the administrator uses a user interface for print queue management. The invention is thus far different from a limitation based on means not involving a system administrator, such as a limitation based on available RAM.

Claims 1 to 11, 14 to 22, 24 to 39, 42 to 50, 52 to 67, 70 to 78, 80 to 95, 98 to 106, 108 to 113, 115, 117 and 119 are in the application. Claims 1, 29, 57 and 85 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The Advisory Action indicated that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for alleged indefiniteness, would be maintained. In response, Applicants respectfully point out that the objected-to phrases (e.g., the received information, the detected printing device) actually clarify the functionality of the invention, by illustrating how the elements of the invention are linked between the different steps or units of the invention. More specifically, in each independent claim, additional terms are provided to

make clear to the reader how each step (or unit) in the claim is linked to previous steps (or unit). For example, Claim 1 recites “detecting a printing device connected on the network”, followed by “requesting configuration information from the detected printing device”, which is followed by “receiving the requested configuration information”, and so on. Thus, these terms clarify how the steps are linked to each other. The detected printing device is the printing device detected in the detecting step, the requested configuration information is the configuration information requested in the requesting step, and so forth. Applicants submit that one skilled in the art would understand the usage of these terms and that the same elements are being referred to throughout the claim. Applicants further submit that these terms do not render claim elements unclear; on the contrary, the objected-to phrases help clarify functionality by further illustrating the relationships between steps (or units) of the claim.

Thus, if the Examiner still believes that this claim language is unclear to one of ordinary skill in the art, Applicants respectfully request further explanation of this position. Otherwise, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Advisory Action further indicated that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) would also be maintained. Pursuant to this rejection, independent Claims 1, 29, 57 and 85 were rejected over European Patent No. 952513 (White), U.S. Patent No. 6,678,068 (Richter) and the background of the invention (AAPA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,930,465 (Bellucco). The remaining claims are dependent, and were rejected as above, or further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,820,124 (Clough) or U.S. Patent No. 6,628,413 (Lee). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

With regard to the § 103 rejection, the Advisory Action states that

[I]n order to desi[g]nate a limitation on the maximu[m] number of print queue, any ordinary skill in the art, for an example, administrator, must know the limitation of RAM in the system. If there is not enough RAM in the system in term of creating the number of print queue desired, the process of creating the desire[d] print queue cannot be made. Therefore, it is only obvious for the administrator to consider the maximum available RAM in the system to decide what is the maximum number of print queue that can be created.

However, a system administrator “considering” or “knowing” that there might be a hardware limitation on the maximum number of queues that can be created, as asserted in the Advisory Action, is not seen to correspond to a system administrator actually designating a maximum number of devices to be supported, or that print queues are not created for a printing device once the designated maximum number is reached, as claimed. As seen by Applicants, the Advisory Action’s interpretation incorrectly disregards the system administrator’s specific claimed role in designating an actual limit on the number of print queues. The Advisory Action appears to merely point out the possible existence of a hardware limitation, whereas in the present invention, the system administrator specifically interferes in the queue creation process.

Nevertheless, and as mentioned above in an effort to clarify this distinction, independent Claims 1, 29, 57 and 85 have been amended to specify that the system administrator designates the maximum number of printing devices to be supported using a print queue management user interface.

Therefore, in view of the above amendments and remarks, independent Claims 1, 29, 57 and 85 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The filing of this RCE, and the corresponding re-opening of prosecution, provides the Examiner with a fresh opportunity for a critical review of the current rejection for obviousness and indefiniteness, to determine whether they meet the factual predicates needed to support them. It is respectfully submitted that when the claimed invention is viewed as a whole, and that when the invention and the cited art are viewed through the eyes of a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, that it cannot properly be concluded that the invention is unpatentable.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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